

This is a public comment for the Wright Petition (CC Docket-#96-128)

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
Public Comments
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Received & Inspected
AUG 21 2012
FCC Mail Room

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I am writing to ask that you consider the Wright Petition that I understand would put a cap on inmate telephone rates.

I have a loved one who is currently incarcerated in the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) and in order to speak with this person on the telephone I am charged outrageous rates. It is my understanding that the telephone provider, Public Communication Services (PCS) charges \$0.05 per minute to provide the actual inmate telephone service, and an additional \$0.15 is added to support a "special fund" created by PCS to generate additional profits for themselves and the MDOC.

This predatory telephone provider collects 30% of the money generated for this fund. They actually make more money from this fund than from providing the actual telephone service. For its part, the MDOC claims it needs this extra money to plug holes in the state's prison budget. Shouldn't that budget funding come through taxes equally spread across the entire tax base? It seems prisoners and families are being permitted to maintain their relationships through telephone calls only if they make a contribution to the MDOC operating budget. Their option is to not use the phone.

Excessive phone fees not only unfairly burden low-income families but also undermine the re-entry and rehabilitation efforts trumpeted by the MDOC. Taxpayers should not have to subsidize prisoner phone calls, but neither should the state and predatory phone companies make millions of dollars on the backs of some of the state's poorest people. This fund is generating over \$9 million annually. Keep in mind, this fund has nothing to do with the necessary cost of providing the telephone service; it's strictly pure profit and greed.

It seems the main function of our FCC is to protect consumers from predatory behavior, and if this doesn't qualify for that protection, then I don't know what would. Please cap these rates and do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Jacklyn Martin

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Sincerely,

Joseph Hoss

CHAIRMAN GENACHOWSKI
FCC
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445 12th ST., S.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

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AUGUST 15, 2012

DEAR CHAIRMAN GENACHOWSKI:

THE PHONE SERVICE PROVIDER T-NETIX/SECURUS IS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF INMATES IN THE CUMBERLAND, MD, REGION. SIR, I AM A LIFER WITH 32 YEARS OF INCARCERATION. I AM CURRENTLY HOUSED AT THE NORTHBRANCH CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION WITH NO REAL MEANS OF SUPPORT FROM FAMILY OR FRIENDS. I MUST MAKE DO WITH THE MEAGER \$18 A MONTH THE STATE PROVIDES FOR WORKING AN INSTITUTIONAL JOB. TRYING TO CARE FOR MY HYGIENE NEEDS AND WRITING MATERIAL JUST ABOUT EXHAUST ALL OF MY STATE PAY.

TO COMMUNICATE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS VIA THE TELEPHONE IS EXTREMELY COSTLY GIVEN MY BUDGET. THE PHONE SERVICE PROVIDER CHARGE 30¢ PER MINUTE. THIS IS A BURDEN ON MY FINANCES. TRYING TO MAINTAIN FAMILIAL BONDS IS HARD ENOUGH BUT THE ADDED BURDENSOME HIGH PHONE COST JUST COMPLICATE MATTERS MORE.

SIR, WE ARE LITERALLY A CAPTIVE CONSUMER,

SO THE PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS ARE
ABUSING THEIR MONOPOLY. BEING THE ONLY
"GAME-IN-TOWN", YOU EITHER PAY FOR THEIR
"CRAPPY" SERVICE OR FORGO PHONE USAGE.
ALSO, WHEN WE COMPLAIN ABOUT A
SPECIFIC PROBLEM, WE ARE ROUTINELY
GIVEN "WE ARE CURRENTLY WORKING TO
FIX OR ADDRESS THE PROBLEM/COMPLAINT".
NEVERTHELESS, WE STILL HAVE TO PAY FOR
THE INADEQUATE PHONE SERVICE. ——— MOST
OF THE BUSINESS DONE HERE AT NBC1 IS
PREPAID.

I/WE NEED SOME RELIEF

SINCERELY,

Michael Henry #157501

MICHAEL HENRY #157501

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August 14th, 2012

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Dear Chairman Julius Genachowski,

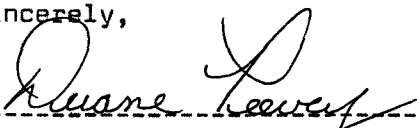
I am writing you in complaint about the phone rates in the Michigan Dept. of Corrections. When I was first incarcerated in 2002 the phone rates were at about eight dollars per 15 minute phone call. Since then we have gotten a new phone contract with the same company and the rates went down to about a dollar fifty per 15 minute phone call. I don't understand how the same company can drop their rates by six dollars and fifty cents per 15 minute call. I have been told that the six fifty is a added surcharge by the state but have no conformation of this.

About one year ago we got a new phone company, (Public Communications Services, 855-466-2832). Now our rates are at about three dollars per 15 minute call. I've been told that there is a 100% mark-up on these rates but there again, I have no conformation of this.

I make better than most prison wages in the MDOC at about fifty dollars per month. My family ask that I call them twice a week to stay in contact with them. I make four to six calls per week to talk to everyone. In a months time that works out to be \$48.00 to \$72.00 dollars per month. I put some funds on a phone card myself and my family puts pre-paid money on their phones too. This has added up to quite a large expense for myself and my family. We would all be very thankful to any relief of this expense. If the surcharges themselves were removed and we only paid the phone companies rates, this would be a big adjustment and savings to myself and my family.

I would like to thank you in advance for your efforts in trying to do something about these very unfair rates that we have been paying over the years.

Sincerely,



Duane Peevey #407493
Carson City Correctional Facility
10274 East Boyer Road
Carson City, Mi. 48811

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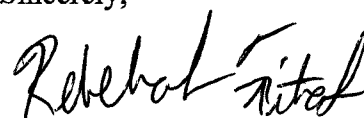
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This predatory telephone provider collects 30% of the money generated for this fund. They actually make more money from this fund than from providing the actual telephone service. For its part, the MDOC claims it needs this extra money to plug holes in the state's prison budget. Shouldn't that budget funding come through taxes equally spread across the entire tax base? It seems prisoners and families are being permitted to maintain their relationships through telephone calls only if they make a contribution to the MDOC operating budget. Their option is to not use the phone.

Excessive phone fees not only unfairly burden low-income families but also undermine the re-entry and rehabilitation efforts trumpeted by the MDOC. Taxpayers should not have to subsidize prisoner phone calls, but neither should the state and predatory phone companies make millions of dollars on the backs of some of the state's poorest people. This fund is generating over \$9 million annually. Keep in mind, this fund has nothing to do with the necessary cost of providing the telephone service; it's strictly pure profit and greed.

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Sincerely,

Penny Snyder